

With the Compliments of Dr. Coates.

Bleak House, Patrington,

January, 1899.

To the District Council of Patrington.

Gentlemen,—I herewith present my third annual report, covering the year ending December 31st, 1898:—

The population of the district is estimated at 8,834. The number of births have been 178, and out of this number 11 were illegitimate, or 1 in 16.18, the respective number of males being 92, and females 86, born as follows:—

	First Quarter.	Second Quarter.	Third Quarter.	Fourth Quarter.
Males	21	29	31	11
Females ...	20	26	24	16

The birth rate has been 29.4 per 1,000, compared with 21.9 in 1897, 25.06 in 1896, 24.08 in 1895, and 22.4 in 1894.

The number of children vaccinated during the year, either publicly or privately, totals 63 only. Eighteen conscientious objectors' certificates have been taken out, but only 8 have been registered.

During the year 113 persons have died—66 males and 47 females. This is at the rate of 12.79 per 1,000, compared with 12.82 in 1897, 14.9 in 1896, 15.5 in 1895, and 12.6 in 1894. The average age at death for the whole district during 1898 has been 43 years 1 month 17 days, compared with 44 years 6 months 1 week and 3 days in 1897, and 47.07 years in 1896. The relative number of deaths at the various ages are:—Under 1 year of age, 24; over 1 and under 5 years, 6; over 5 and under 15 years, 5; over 15 and under 25 years, 11; over 25 and under 65 years, 23; 65 years and over, 44.

The Coroner has held seven inquests during the year, and three deaths are returned as uncertified in addition.

The following have been the chief causes of death:—Diphtheria, 1; membranous croup, 5; enteric fever, 1; influenza, 9; dysentery, 1; consumption, 8; respiratory diseases, 7; heart diseases, 21; cancer, 5; injuries, 7; all other diseases, 48. No deaths occurred during 1898 in the parishes of Hilston, Hollym, Kilnsea, Outnewton, Owstwick, Rimswell, and Winestead.

The deaths took place as follows:—

	First Quarter.	Second Quarter.	Third Quarter.	Fourth Quarter.
Males	25	16	13	12
Females ...	12	17	9	9

The death rate of infants under 1 year was at the rate of 134.8 per 1,000 of registered births.

Following my usual plan, I append a list showing at a glance the births, deaths, comparative rate of

death, and the average age at death for the various parishes in the union:—

	Bths.	Dths.	Com. death rate per 1,000.	Com. birth rate per 1,000.	Avg. age at dth.
Burstwick	12	8	17.7	26.6	53
Burton Pidsea ...	6	3	8.57	17.14	27
Easington	13	5	12.95	33.67	62
Frodingham	1	—	—	14.92	—
Halsham	5	4	16.6	20.83	61
Hilston	—	—	—	—	—
Hollym	6	—	—	21.42	—
Holmpton	3	1	5.0	15.00	68
Keyingham	16	10	17.24	27.58	35
Kilnsea	1	—	—	6.25	—
Ottringham	8	8	15.38	15.38	30
Outnewton	1	—	—	23.25	—
Owstwick	1	—	—	11.23	—
Owthorne	5	1	10.0	50.0	2d
Patrington	19	17	14.40	18.64	44
Union	3	6	—	—	68
Paull	16	7	12.50	28.57	29
Rinswell	5	—	—	41.62	—
Roos	8	3	6.12	16.32	43
Ryehill	3	5	19.23	17.53	32
Skeffling	4	5	37.03	29.6	47
Sunk Island	5	3	6.6	11.1	36
Thorngumbald ...	3	3	10.34	10.34	53
Tunstall	2	1	8.3	16.6	4m
Waxholme	3	3	42.85	42.85	48
Welwick	10	5	15.82	31.65	60
Winstead	5	—	—	35.71	—
Withernsea Con- valescent Home	13	15	16.6	18.6	38
	—	—	—	—	—

For statistical purposes Withernsea is included until September 30th only, after that date it became a separate urban district. Influenza made its appearance from time to time, unfortunately resulting directly in 9 deaths, independently of those due to diseases induced by the epidemic. During 1897 only 3 deaths were attributed to this cause. It was found necessary to close Halsham Schools during December for an exceedingly widespread epidemic of measles. In future, where a public school is to be closed, it will be necessary for two of the District Councillors to sign the notice authorising the closure, in addition to my consent as Medical Officer of Health, until the matter is brought before the sanitary authority.

With the adoption of the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act of 1889, I have been better able to investigate the progress of the zymotic diseases in the district. The number of cases (21) reported during the year are as follows:—Scarlet fever, 11 cases, at Withernsea, Ryehill, Hollym, Easington, Roos, and Paull; diphtheria, 4 cases, at Withernsea and Keyingham; membranous croup, 1 case, at Burstwick; erysipelas, 2 cases, at Roos and Patrington; enteric fever, 3 cases, at Withernsea, Patrington, and Easington. It is as well to remember that there is a fine of 40 shillings for failure to notify infectious diseases by the persons having charge of the case. The total cost to the Council for the working of this Act, the adoption of which

was opposed so long, has only been £2 12s 6d for the whole year, and the opportunity to cope with disease in its incipient stage must be cheap at that price.

Unfortunately Keyingham has been the seat of two distinct outbreaks of severe and infectious throat troubles, resulting in two deaths. Diphtheria has also been notified to me as being present. The Council will remember that I have repeatedly warned them about this village, and the necessity for prompt action whenever an epidemic is threatened. As recently as last August I wrote predicting an outbreak of diphtheria, which duly arrived. The Council determined to put down settling pits, a course I could not acquiesce in, and only consented to upon the express understanding that they should be frequently cleansed out and disinfected. What has been the result? The Council have deputed their power to the Parish Council, who only had the pits attested to once, and that only after repeated requests, during the many months intervening from the construction of the pits until December 14th, when, after another epidemic was well on its way, they again tardily cleansed them. I have no fault to find with the system of deputing work by the Council to either the District Councillors or the Parish Council, but the Council must remember that, although they can depute their powers, they cannot depute "their liabilities," and if their agents, whether Parish Council or District Councillors, fail to efficiently discharge their deputed duties, the District Council must always remain primarily liable for any defects arising from their negligence. Apropos of this, it is not the correct thing, as I have before pointed out, to put down sanitary pipes without properly cementing the joints. In the case of the portion of the drainage executed by this Council at Keyingham, a large portion of it has been laid uncemented, and only when attention was drawn to the fact did the remainder, and a comparatively small portion, receive proper attention. The settling pits should be cleansed out every week in summer, and every month in winter, and there should be no excuse accepted for any neglect of this elementary precaution. An ordinary cart is not the proper channel to convey the sludge removed from the settling pits. The vehicles used should be proof against escape of the sewage matter, or it may become a medium for the dissemination of disease, and not a preventative.

The sanitary condition of Winstead has been brought to my notice by the chief landlord (H. Reckitt, Esq., M.P.), and at his request I have given it my attention. I analysed 25 samples of water. Many were good, some indifferent, and a few bad. The owner on his own initiative at once gave orders to have every well thoroughly cleansed, and the surroundings placed in such a sanitary condition as to preclude any chance of contamination from surface sewage. I made the suggestion, which is well worthy of the attention of all property owners in the district, that the floors of all the soil closets should be cemented to prevent sewage finding its way into the well. Mr Reckitt accepted this, and caused the whole

of the closets, yards, &c., to be efficiently cemented. Winestead can now be classed as a sanitary model for a small country parish. I cannot too strongly condemn some of the wooden closets in use in some villages in the district.

The attention of the Local Government Board has been directed to the insanitary condition of the workhouse, and the inadequate accommodation for the infirm sick. This has received the attention of the Board, and the matters complained of no doubt will be rectified early in the present year.

During the year a new Vaccination Act has been passed, and it will be the duty of a public vaccinator in future who postpones a vaccination owing to prevalence of infectious disease in his district, or if the house in which the child resides be in such a condition that the child cannot be safely vaccinated, to forward to the Medical Officer of Health forthwith a notice of such certificate (Section 4). In regard to vaccination, there appears to be considerable misunderstanding in the district. Compulsory vaccination is not abolished, it still is the law that all children must be vaccinated, and parents or guardians will still be liable to prosecution if, after four months have elapsed from the date of the child's birth they have not obtained a magistrate's certificate that they have a conscientious objection to vaccination, and transmitted it to the vaccination officer. At the end of the four months the public vaccinator will call and offer to vaccinate the child free of charge to the parents. If this is not accepted it will be the duty of the vaccination officer to issue a summons for the default. The Guardians will not initiate the proceedings in future unless the vaccination officer neglects his duty.

During the year 84 notices to abate nuisances have been served, and all have been satisfactorily abated except two, the statutory period not having yet elapsed for summonses to be issued in these cases. Fifteen written complaints were made to the Inspector of Nuisances, and five summonses were issued, four at Keyingham and one at Paull. Fifteen wells were complained about, and in 14 improvements were effected. Fifty closets have been inspected and alterations in their construction made. The drainage of the schools at Hollym has been satisfactorily completed.

The number of deaths from consumption is too high (one in 13). This, again, is a disease which prudent care and attention might considerably mitigate, especially in the country. A step in the right direction would be the veterinary inspection of cows for tuberculosis.

Taking the district all round the sanitary condition is fair, and the health of the inhabitants good.

I am, gentlemen, yours, &c.,

W. H. COATES,

Licentiate in Sanitary Science,

M.A., M.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.S.A., F.C.S.,

H.M. Certifying Surgeon, &c.,

Member of the Inner Temple.

Medical Officer of Health, Patrington.